The Churches COMPLAINT Against SACRILEDGE: OR Sacriledge truely Dissected and layed open.

Wherein is briefly shewn:

1. The Just Collation, 2. The unjust Ablation of the Riches and Honours of the CLERGY.

Thou that abhorrest Idols, Doest thou commit Sacriledge.

LONDON: Printed in the Yeer 1643.

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OF Sacriledge.

Eligion is as the Poles of the World, of that *Atlas*, which (the Poets fay) holds up Heaven, it ſtands on Earth and reacheth God. It is that which poiſeth Societies and States below; for without the opinion of a Providence, to overſee and reckon with us, might, craft, and falſhood would ſway in the world alike with Men and Beaſts, the conſcience of good and evill would be all one. And it is that which enobleth man, erects his affections, and eſtates him in a happineſſe above nature: and in a word, it procures all bleſſings upon us. So that whether we aime at a Spirituall, or (which is more to theſe times) a civill weale only, Religion is mainly to be magnified. I. The neceſſities of Religion in States.

And as Religion upholds States, the Prieſt uſually, after the inward vertue of the Doctrine it ſelf, II. Of the prieſt in Religion.

is he upholds Religion. Religion can neither plant nor sustaine it selfe alone, and what support soever it have from the Prince, or the laws of a Nation, the Priest is as the soule of that power; all circumstance and Ceremonies have their life from him; and it is our consent in his holy Calling, that keeps us from the singularitie of our owne imaginations. Though man of himself be Religious, to make men conspire in one Religion, they must have some thing singular to hold to. Though there may bee Religion, and a Congregation, there can hardly be a Church, where there is no Precentor.

III. Of the meanes to set up the Priest.

Now the gifts whereby the Priest retaines our reverence, are either Spirituall or Supernaturall, as of Propheſiing and working Miracles; or Naturall and Externall, as the endowments and glories of this World: whereof the former shew where God is, the later where he hath been: and the former proceed immediately from the Spirit, in the later men may concurre.

IV. The order of these meanes in all Religions.

However God deales in truth, he seemes not at so much cost for maintaining the World, as for making it. In nature we see every thing for its Creation requires a miraculous and divine hand, but planted once, God is not so conspicuous, but leaves it to the soyle, as it were, to stand and grow by it selfe: and so it would seeme to fare even with Religion it selfe, which is such a superstruction above Nature, though it be planted by God, men must conserve it. The Church is like the Garden of *Eden*, which God made, and set our Parents to dresse, and keepe it.

II. The severall formes of Religion which have swayed

swayed the world, in their times, (in presence at least) have sole his arme, and expected ours; his arme of Divinitie, and ours of munificence; that the riches, and braveries of this world, whereupon men set greatest prices might adorne their doctrine; and not only the abstract and studious minds, but sensuall affections also thereby be mused, and caught, and all our lusts there find repose. This is not only the mystery of Antichrist, and Idolatry, but the right of all Religion. The *Israelites* at first had their Tabernacle, and its attendants, by Gods appointment, glorious, however *Aarons* inward devotion shone, his Vestments and retinue too were very specious: but the Temple of *Ierusalem*, and the riches of the severall orders of the Priests thereof exceßive; and yet little enough to keep the people from Idolatry.

And Christianitie, as much as it excels all other Sects, for ought that wee know, can but expect the same lot. In planting of the Gospell (indeed) God shewed himselfe in signes and wonders, hee powred forth his Spirit, and accommodated it with a kindly soyle; the munificent affections of men, whereby it is growne in state and glory.

But though it was first propagated by such sedulity of the Spirit, and God shewed himselfe therein, as much as ever; though Christ hath promised the Holy Ghost, thereby to preserve to himself a Church upon earth, unto the worlds end; wee now want the sense and proof of Gods presence, the Primitive times had; and may conceive he lookes not still to be tempted to miracles: Divine and humane meanes must concur. That interest the Gospell hath gotten, these outward worldly braveries, after the plausibleneße of the

doctrine it selfe, are the best evidence we have left for Christianitie: the best, at least, we have to shew to one another. Riches and honours now must serve for the Spirit.

V. The originall and right of our Hierarchy.

Those of the Ancient worthys that first propagated Christianitie, had neither Diocesse nor Parish, but the wide world before them: they had nothing of their own, yet such a Familiar had they of the Holy Ghost, they could want nothing. Then, all planting the same doctrine, every man had a care of all the Churches, and looked to the watering too of what was planted; and the people, as conscious of the truth they heard, took speciall order to preserve the same amongst them. Heroicke minides not knowing in the world better how to bestow their estates, in testimony of their affection, erected Churches, and endowed them with priviledges, gave them Tyths and Oblations, unto a competence of maintenance, they added superfluitie, and with riches, gave honour and sway to the Clergie. Kings as was fore-prophesied, became the Churches nursing Fathers, and Queenes her nursing Mothers. They made Religion the busines of States, which now we make but a State instrument of. They had a care to fortifie Religion against the corruption of nature, and to recommend and seale their faith unto worse times: as if by a holy kinde of Simony, they would purchase the Holy Ghost, and buy the Prince of darknesse out of his dominions. They priviledged Churchmen to their owne cognizance, to arme and hearten them against sinne; that they might not only like Musitians play for a benevolence, but that Magistrates themselves might not with more authoritie transgresse, than the Priest rebuke them. They held

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up degrees in the Church, as objects still for industry in the Priest, and reverence in the people; a reverence, which in a right way, halfe performes Religion. They constituted Bishops, and Archbishops; Churchmen for Church affaires, one of most tryed truth, and but one for expedition: where the Law is agreed upon, a single eye may see Justice; or most easily answer for it. Bishops for order at home, and Archbishops further (if we shall not seeme to be led by sounds) as arches in metropolisses over other Bishops, arches unto the King and unto forreigne Churches, that though States differ, the communion of Saints might be preserved, the Church might keep at unitie, and by united force repell heresie.

In no great Councell could the man of God bee baulked, that they might be sure to serve God before themselves; as secure, that while the Church prospered, and they had God amongst them, all was safe: and in Courts of Conscience, where the Lawes reached not, they thought none so fit as the man of conscience, and ranked Bishops and Archbishops in honour with Dukes and Barons. And these things were first and certaine, to avoid the feaver of a quotidian canvase, and that in standing counsell they might the more improve themselves, and profit others, and the law of Christ and his Church, be sure to receive no detriment; and for supply of mens mortalitie, they founded Colledges and Cathedrals. Thus they kept up mens hopes and imaginations, making the Priesthood answerably incomprehensible with their God, and the Crowne received lustre, in conjunction with the Mitre. According to the rules of that great Architect, they built *ad usum, ad speciem, & ad firmitatem*

tem, an Hierarchie for use, and shew, and an Hierarchie for durance, as firme as lawes could make it: as conscious, that if the Clergie be so thin laid, that the people may looke through and round about it, it will soone fall into contempt, and Religion be exploded.

Thus Christianitie grew upon the world, mankind became throughly religious, and the Tempter was well nigh discouraged in his businesse. This was the flourishing state of Christs Church on earth, which we can only hope to have amended in Heaven. And herein, God be thanked, our Church of England had her share

Nor was this meerely matter of State, but a Religious Policie. The ancient stile of Grants and Charters, for these matters, was *Domino Deo nostro offerimus & dicamus*, we give them unto God. And under the Law, God as he instituted them, tooke them to himselfe. For gifts and oblations he saith, *Thou shalt give them me, Exod.* 22. 30. For Churches and Oratories, *My House, Mat.* 21. 13. For Tythes, *Will a man rob God? Malach.* 3. 9. For Lands, *Ye shall offer unto the Lord an holy portion, Ezek.* 45. 1. For their persons and Honours, *Touch not mine Annointed, nor doe my Prophets no harme, Psal.* 105. 15. And the same Law, Saint *Paul* presseth under the Gospell, 1 *Cor.* 9. 13, 14. 1. *Tim.* 5. 17, 18. Though we have some difference in the manner of Worship, Sacrifice and severall Ceremonies being abolished, there is the same substance for Guides in Gods worship, which is the Reason of the Law, as the Prophet *Isaiah*, in the name of the Lord foretold, *Isaiah* 66. 21. *And I will take of them for Priests and for Levites, saith the Lord:* Priests hee saith, not meerely Laymen, nor meerely Priests, but severall

ſeverall degrees, Prieſts and Levites. This is a principall branch of that honouring God with our Subſtance, which is enjoyned, *Prov.* 3. 9. what we relieve the poore with, is not ſo much our Almes, as their exigence; and as neceſſitie exacts it, it quickly periſheth. But theſe Donations, as they ſavour of a more inward and deeper Pietie, are of a more lasting ſubſtance. Beſides, the eternall Treaſures we lay up for our ſelves, we provide for the perpetuitie of Religion unto after Ages of men, and may be ſaid to honour God not only in our ſelves, but in all wee gaine to honour him.

But for the Hierarchie, becauſe that is moſt ſtuck at. Firſt, wee muſt conceive order and decency long before riches, and the favour of States in the Church. It was many Ages, and the Goſpell had a large ſpread, before Emperours were reclaimed to Chriſtianitie. And though wee have no ſpeciall rule from Chriſt himſelfe, for thoſe rounds of Order, but the Originall of our Church Government, through thoſe Miſts of times, bee ſcarce perceptible; If wee trace Epiſcopacy backwards (however the favours of the World came in by degrees) wee ſhall reſolve it upon the Apoſtles Age, and finde the like preſumptions in Reaſon for our Prieſthood, as for our Sabboth. As the magnificence of the Jewiſh Church was commanded by God himſelfe; the ſame Providence, though in a ſecret way, would ſeeme to have introduced our Church Diſcipline. Our Saviour came rather to plant Pietie, than Government; that as abſolutely neceſſary he provided for, and left Government for the worke of time, and a Teſtimony of his Doctrines Approbation.

Though he condemn'd the Ambition of honour in his Disciples, more than to glorifie God thereby, and make them more beneficent and serviceable unto others; never was there greater friend to order and government, hee stood for *Cæsar*, and hee stood for God, and would have the Scribes and Pharisees themselves, in *Moses* Chaire, observed. As himselfe assum'd the Title of Lord and Master, he allowed of a *Maximus* and a *Minimus* amongst his Disciples, so the greatest became as the least, to serve and minister to the rest. At his departure, hee had many things to say unto his Disciples, which then they could not beare, but the Holy Ghost hee promised them should abide with them, and leade them into all truth: And secondly, bring to their remembrance whatsoever he had told them. What the many things wanting our Saviour meant, might be, is difficult. *Ethicen Christianam*, Rules for private life hee had laid himselfe, they would need only a Remembrancer for them. But *Politia Ecclesiastica*, this point of Discipline, for Church government, seemes a truth as then untaught; and being such a maine thing, and requiring time to make the World capable of it, me thinks we should hold a reverend esteeme of what wee finde so setled; whether by the Apostles, or their successors. The Holy Ghost was sufficient warrant for the Apostles, and the abiding of the Holy Ghost, suggests a regard to their Successors, and hereunto perhaps that speech is to be referred, *Matth.* 28. 20. *Lo, I am with you allway even to the end of the World.* Popish extravagancies as they have not the like necessitie, nor the like antiquitie, have not the like plea with government. Humilitie garnished with miracles, or a mi-

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raculous humilitie, which our Saviour himselfe practised, was the likeliest way in reason, at first for the planting of the Gospell of humilitie. It was reverend in it selfe, and unlike to provoke the jealousie of States: honour comes kindely eft of it self, and shews most glorious when it is rather found than sought. Yet it is Gods owne promise, that he that humbleth himselfe should be exalted. It is the honour of Christianitie, that it could deserve honour while it dispised it. As the people would have taken our Saviour, and made him King, 'tis like they fastened favours upon his followers. And miracles ceasing, the legall asserting of some Church discipline was in reason worthy of Acceptation. It cannot bee doubted, but the Apostles were the Patriarchs or Grandfathers of the Church. The number of twelve was not without a Mysterie, and the precise supply of that number, in the Election of *Matthias*, proves a precedence in them, above the Seventie Disciples. As they begot sons to God, they adopted fellow labourers into their Ministerie, such (no doubt) as observed their Fathers while they lived, and so farre approved of the benefit of that order they found under them, that they maintain'd it after their dissolutions. As the twelve were call'd first, the Evangelists make speciall mention of their names, and their families, as whom they ought to honour. They were more conversant with Christ, and more instructed by him, and continued with him unto the end. And after his Resurrection he applyed himselfe especially to them. Then hee renewed their Commission with a *Sicut misit me Pater*, to boote, which may extend to Jurisdiction and Ordination; Ordination of the Clergie, and Ju-

rtſdiction over the whole Church; and to enable them for ſuch ſervice, he made good his promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, and gave them power of binding and looſing ſins. Saint *Paul* I am ſure aſſumed this Authority to himſelfe, hee counted himſelfe a Maſter-builder, whoſe office is to order the worke, and command inferiour Workmen: hee exerciſed a Legiſlative power; hee excommunicated (for inſtance) the Inceſtuous Perſon, and againe reſtored him; as may bee ſeene in his Epiſtles, which all abound with Canons and Conſtitutions Eccleſiaſticall. This power of ordering Church affaires, hee further propagated to *Timothy*, and *Titus*; as appeares in the Rules and directions to them. And ſo (for it would be tedious to name particulars) it would ſeeme to have beene derived to our times. Whether our forme of Church Government came from the light of nature, and the Iewiſh patterne (for reaſon extols it, and * there is a correſpondence between the Jewiſh and the Chriſtian Hierarchie,) or from a ſpeciall Illumination and motion of the Spirit of God; (which the former times exceld in) it is as needleſſe, as hard to diſtinguiſh, perhaps all concur'd, however Chriſt we ſee, *Apoc.* 1.20. * approves of ſuch Biſhops, and honours them with the Title of Starres, and Angels (as Diabolicall as ſome would make them) and * *Calvin* and *Luther* themſelves could not but approve of this Government, and (waveing the name) came as neere unto an Epiſcopall forme as the iniquitie of their times would admit. Though we determine not, whether *Iure Divino*, or *humano*, It will ſuffice us Epiſcopacy is rightly conſtituted.

See B. Andrews Anal.

See Archbiſhop of Armaghs Orig.

See Maſons addicions.

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It were to be wiſhed indeed our Doctrine had ſtill the ſame Primitive Teſtimony, and our Miniſtery that viſible Aſſiſtance of Diviſity, the firſt times of the Church enjoyed; which a *Simon Magus* could prize above riches, which ſhewed men nearer favourites with God, than riches make them with Kings; which might confound, and ſtop the mouthes of all gainſayers, and all men be wholly convinced and compelled to obedience. But we can no more expect theſe now, than they at firſt could challenge our Priviledges.

VI. The Primitive aſſiſtance of the Spirit to bee wiſht, not expected.

Such aſſiduity and open violence of the Spirit, though neceſſary for times otherwiſe anticipated, where Chriſtianity hath once advanced its banners and engaged the world, would render our Faith not worth God ha' mercy.

That humble temper and exemplary lowlineſſe of Spirit, could our Church aſſuredly bee furniſhed with it, hath a winning grace, and bravery above State. Heathens have ſeene its beauty, and beene enamour'd on it. But its chiefeſt efficacy is with minds already pious, which (God knowes) is the ſmalleſt part of mankinde, and ſuch Ornaments being at no certainty, no not in Church-men, ſuch ſupplements as may bee had, for eſtabliſhing Religion, are to bee allowed it.

It was our Saviours owne Precept to his Diſciples, *Be wiſe as Serpents, but innocent as Doves*, Chriſtianity and Policy, the wiſedome of Serpents, and the innocence of Doves, may ſtand together, and while wee are but as ſheepe amongſt wolves, it is but neceſſary they ſhould. The leaders that are upon ſuch hard ſervice, had need have the beſt proviſion, and the

beſt order, that may bee, the beſt to preſerve themſelves, and advance the Church. Forreigne plants we know are choyce, and require a ſpeciall care, and Chriſtianity being ſuch a ſupernaturall ſtem, will need; and being ſo Noble, will deſerve our beſt foſtering.

When God ſends Angels Embaſſadors to men, hee puts them in humane ſhapes, the better to comply with human nature. But when men are to act *Gods* part, they had need put on all the Divinity that may be. Riches and honours are not oppoſite to humility, but make more conſpicuous. Though a Divine ſhew more ſacred without either ſtaffe, or ſcrip, as hee that hath wholly caſt off this world, for his hopes in another; a knap-ſacke and ſword now is thought no luggage; whilſt we are men, and moſt part fleſh and bloud, the Elements we conſiſt of would find ſome likely nutriment, and the ſupports of this life, not wholly bee neglected. It was a ſad, but ſage conſideration of the Poet,

Quis virtutem amplectitur ipſam,
Præmia ſi tollas?----.

We would have a Learned and Religious Clergie, otherwiſe wee have ſmall hopes they ſhould make others ſuch; but we ſhall hardly find learning or Piety flouriſh without theſe encouragements. To paſſe by the improbity of Poverty, which is far above that of plenty, Though knowledge as the light of the ſoule, for it ſelfe be deſirable, men ſteare not thitherward, unleſſe their other deſires be otherwiſe ſatisfied, or learning ſeeme the meanes to ſatisfie them. Or how forward ſoever

soever they may bee to learne, to make them teach, they must yet have some further incentive. Or though good natures might so farre exalt their mindes, experienced Parents, while it is in their power, will be wary how they dedicate and breed up a son to a studious beggery. We must expect Priests, with a curse, of the lowest of the people, or the halt and the maimed out of greater families, if Divinity and the service of God cannot advance, like the Law, or the sword, or one of the twenty foure companies. The gifts of miracles, of infallibility, and Prophesiing cease, and expect wee the Spirit of selfe-denyall as fresh as ever? The wisest Law-givers have beene wont to consider men, *In massa corrupta*, averse from all good, and only to be reclaimed by reward, and punishment: and hath this last thrifty Age discovered a new way, to put these accounts upon the world to come? Or only to be liberall in her punishments? Those that travaile to *Rome*, or *Ierusalem*, what satisfaction soever they promise themselves, at their Journies end, are glad to turne in sometimes by the way, and refresh themselves in other Cities, and meaner Innes; and by such discreet stayes, hasten their course.

Such a Journey have wee to that heavenly *Canaan*, (a Journey I account it, not an anxious Pilgrimage,) though the rest we promise our selves there, be above all the repasts of the way, and those especially that convert sinners, have the assurance to shine like Starres in the Firmament; to support fraile nature, and keepe a sense of what wee expect, the hospitality of this world is intended us. Though our devotion lye for Heaven, Riches, Honours, and pleasures, all the glories of this light may bee our baiting places; so wee

make

make this world but as the City we paſſe through, not inhabit; and theſe braveries but as vyands to refreſh, not luggage to hinder our journey. This world is an honeſt Inne, the inordinate Affections, and dotage of the gueſts, make a brothell of it. Could our guides ſuſtaine themſelves with the hopes of the world to come, it muſt needs put mettle into us. Who would not more cheerefully follow ſuch Leaders? and could our Law-givers be exemplary herein, it might excite our guides. But they being of the ſame mold with us, why ſhould we expect it? why ſhould wee ſtomacke them the repaſt we allow our ſelves? and looke that they ſhould forfeite all for us? It argues diſproportioned mindes, to affect ſuch diſproportion. We muſt not ſtand on what we would have, but what is juſt, and equall.

VII. The ſin of Sacriledge.

Since then Religion is ſuch a ground of happineſſe, and riches and honors, now ſuch maine props of Religion; juſtly hath Sacriledge, or the diminution hereof, beene ever accounted the higheſt, the boldeſt and the damnableſt ſin in the world. Supplant Religion, and we diſſolve all the tyes betwixt God and men; we weigh anchor, and fall to Sea again, the Sea of vulgar paſſions. Other miſchiefes have their limits, they hurt but one or other, and there is an end. But this ſtrikes at goodnes it ſelfe, it ſets the world beſides its hinges, & ſweeps our peace from off the earth. God, the King, and all of us, are thereby damnified. He hath a heart of Iron, a ſalvage, and Cyclopike breaſt, that can invade Heaven and rob God, that can pull downe the Prerogative of the King, and his Crowne too, and ſpoyle mankind of their ſafety. Heathens themſelves have alwayes had more reverence to things dedicated

unto

unto their gods, and to violate but the Religion of other Countryes, though much more vaine than their owne, looked so monstrous, that it was ever accounted inauspicious; and the wrongs done to a false Deity, carryed an horror with it, and was usually revenged by the true one. Histories abound with such monuments, and it was long ere this crime was knowne in Christendome.

VIII. The colours for Sacriledge dispelled.

Yet now, though we love not to speake plainely of Church riches, there are foure Colours for Sacriledge, Revenge, conscience, convenience, and covetousnesse; which together, and a part, threaten havocke.

First, (for our angry Passions usually lead in these tumultuary courses) men cry out upon the insolence of the Bishops, that they have severall times endangered the liberty of the State; and now they have them in their power, they will root out them. *Rome*, the truth is, *Rome* the place of the Imperiall seate, hath given ground for such reasoning. When it enjoyed all the happinesse this life is capable of, it grew exorbitant. That state which seem'd above forreigne casualty, laboured with its owne happinesse, and from its height (which is the course of worldy things) found way to ebbe againe.

The Bishops there too conscious of their own greatnesse, and the influence they had upon the State, not content with their Primacy, abused Religion into Policie; and casting off all moderation, the Pope devoured the Emperour. Thus the Head of the Church degenerated into a monster, and drew the whole world after him. In reaching at Temporall Sovereignty, he broke the Spirituall unity, and the wound got the obduration to become incurable; hee disdaining once to come to the barre as a delinquent, having power to his wickednesse.

I defend not *Rome*, nor shall I excuse our owne late Bishops. Liberty is our common birth-right, which ought to be deare unto us next our Faith. But their malice, whatsoever we conceive it, hath not beene so contagious, I hope, as to pollute all they touched, so that Episcopacie, the office it selfe, cannot again be hallowed. Though Bishops have abused their power to oppression (oppression, which is the proper sin of Power) this world is no state of perfection, other men will doe as much; the abuse of things must not take away their use. By that Rule we shall neither have Magistrate, nor people, in that all have sinned. To decry an Office, an office (as hath been shewen) rightly instituted, for some men in it, is an Act for mad men, not for Legislators; wisemen cannot be in earnest. It were a course to deale with an enemy, when we have him in our Power, to make sure work. But God and our selves are herein interest. Offices are Gods, though men are in them, and God catcheth not advantages against us. Lastly, our revenge will light upon our own pates, we shall pull out our own eyes, and dash out our own brains. We shall soone find and rue the losse of such order. If we feare the Tyrannie of Bishops themselves, we consider not we have a Gracious King, and shal have Parliaments to do Justice. If we feare their drawing towards *Rome*, we forget our Præmunire. If we feare their setting up the King, their will be more feare of more active Instruments. Something must be left to God, and the goodnes of Princes.

Secondly, some from our Saviours words, *Mat.* 23. 8 *But be not yee called Rabbi, &c.* damne all superintendencie in men in holy orders, as unlawfull and Antichristian. But all the world may see, it is the Pharisaicall vain-glorious Affectation to be magnified of men, *ver.* 5. 6. not the Authority, or the title and preheminence

to

to God-ward, is here forbidden. And otherwise, the Precept (being given to the people and the Disciples, *v.* 1.) will serve to pull down temporall Lords, and the Presbyterians too as well as Bishops. Nor is there any reason the rule, *vos autem non sic*, when it is laid betwixt the Princes of the *Gentiles*, and the Disciples alone, *Ch.* 20. 27. (as here betwixt the Pharisees and the multitude) should carry a harder interpretation.

Though the Disciples onely happened to be present, when mother *Zebede* gave the occasion of the words, they were men by nature, however Disciples by calling; and when we extend prohibitions to them beyond their persons, they usually represent not Ministers alone but all Christians whatsoever: vice may bee more unseemly in Clergy men, but it is as unlawful in all *Christians*. But against the power and authority of Divines in Temporall affaires, they further presse the practice of the Apostles *Acts* 6. 2. and Reason from thence, That it is too much for Divines to be knowing men in busines of estate, and to understand the Rules and Lawes of government. But first, the provision for the poore, about which the question is; was laid at the Apostles feete, to be distributed by them, *Acts* 4. 35. Secondly, though the Apostles thought not meet to leave the word of *God* wherewith the world, as yet was not acquainted, to wait on Tables, which was below their ministery; It shewes their understanding, and authority, in that they gave order for fit Stewards and Overseers. Thirdly, these men make Divines men of too narrow capacities, and set Gods Law and mans at too great distance, If Statesmen have soules to bee saved, whereunto the Ministery may contribute. If the heathen Oratour must be seen in all the arts, and nooks of learning, the Christian Doctor had need bee bard no field of knowledge, for the soule

he is to look to, is thrice more worth than the goods of Fortune. Our Brethren of *Scotland* and all it seems are out, who take their Church-men along in their weightyest affaires, and their Sermons here in *England* they say savoured of some thing more than pure preaching of the Gospell.

The Clergie are men, men of liberall education, they wade through the Arts, ere they come at divinity, wherby (me thinks) they should be capable of human affaires with other men. And Divinity can bee no hinderance. Perhaps they are better seene in Ecclesiasticall matters, and therefore may arrogate them as their peculiar, but for us to exclude them our Councells, as an abject generation, who have the deepest share in Gods promise of assistance, and give the best Authority to resolutions, comming in the Name of God, cannot proceed either from good policy or Religion. The Priest-hood amongst the *Iewes* had a hand in all Temporall affaires, and in matters meerely of order and government, and no way Typicall, *Iewes* (as hath beene said) may bee Presidents for Christians. The Apostles perhaps at first exercised none other Authority but the Spirituall power of excommunication, to withhold the Ordinances, and forbid Communion which delinquents, and left further censures to the Secular Magistrate. But when Princes received the Gospell, they requited the Ministers thereof with a share of their power, and magnified their authority with the glory of these Ministers.

Perhaps it had been sinne in them at first not to have honoured the Gospell: but for us to devest it, is more out of question.

Their Voyces in Parliament, *&c*, may seeme matters of small moment, for the publike peace. But besides

ſides the diſhonour to Religion, they are of dangerous conſequence, for the ſame reaſon that ſhall invalid them, may as well overthrow the whole Fabrick of the Church. And it is to be feared it is ſome mens aime to effect that by degrees, which at once they find not feaſable. The Prelate ſpoke not by rote, who ſaid they would ſerve them as High-way men doe honeſt Travellers, firſt gag, and bind, then rifle them.

Thirdly, they pretend a convenience in pulling down Order and Government in the Church, to buy in Impropriations, and ſet up preaching. Preaching in deede and labouring in the Word have high Attributes in Scripture, as of introducing grace, and working faith, &c. and the Goſpell at firſt being committed to the boſomes of men, the only way then of propagating thereof was Sermon-wiſe, by a kinde of Preaching, Chriſt thus taught the people, and inſtituted his Diſciples to this Annunciation. But their preaching was not the ſame in uſe with us, theirs had its Authoritie from the Spirit, they ſpake by, which wee borrow from their writings. Any way of publiſhing and promoting the Goſpell, is preaching in the Scriptures ſenſe, as well as our expoſition of Scripture, the word εὐαγγελίζειν involves them all, nor can the foreſaid Attributes, be appropriated to that which we call preaching. Saint *Paul* laboured in the Goſpell, before there was a Goſpell written; hee laboured by word and writing, by conſtituting Canons, and in ſeeing them obſerv'd: and now not only extemporary Expoſitions, but all effectuall meanes for the propagation of the Tenor thereof, is the Ordinance of God, and no doubt his free Spirit accordingly conferreth grace and faith by them: Whether they bee Doctrinall, by word, and writing, by catechiſme to young beginners, by reading of the Scriptures, Apo-

chryphall Bookes, divine Homilies, or other profitable discourses: or after institution magisteriall by enacting and establishing good lawes, as Kings and Emperours (we know) being converted, by their Edicts, in an instant, more advanced the Gospell, than private Preachers with many Sermons in many ages, though otherwise they had extraordinary assistance of the Spirit. The Gospell may and must be preach'd in every Court, that is, Christs law must be there preserved; and though that bee not the proper place for teaching, there may happen to bee as effectuall Sermons, for the promotion of the Gospell, from the Bench, as from the Pulpit, where men of power meet and draw things to a point, there, there is preaching powerfull. Thus some particular Bishops have had the oportunitie to doe more good, than all the Clergie in their Dioceſſe againe. Neither in words alone, but in workes of pietie, and buſineſſe of State, Christ may be advanced, Lay-men may, but Ministers more especially must, thus Evangelize. Our preaching and practising, and writing, and Government, are all twines of that Mother preaching in Scripture: Let preaching be the eldest and the faireſt ſiſter, their dowries and their vertues may be alike, we must not set too great a price on one, to disparage the rest; or because preaching was first of all, reduce Christianity to its principles, and hold there. This were, as if because Writing was before Printing, and then had high elogies amongst the ancients, we should renounce the benefit of Printing, to hold to Writing only, or prefer it before Printing. This is the grand impoſture and illuſion of the Age. Preaching is cryed up, nought but Preaching, God knowes a sorry kind of Preacding, when nobler helpes should share. Its to bee feared they would serve the

Clergy

Clergie, as the Fox in the fable did the Crow, commend their voices, till they let goe their morſells: where wee heare knowledge is confined, wee cannot thinke *libertas Prophetandi*, ſhall have its ſcope. As in Reaſon we excell beaſts: Elocution, whereby we readilyeſt conveigh our conceit to others, exalts us amongſt men. Sermons may be moſt appoſite to the maladies of the hearers; and beſt fit for their affections, they moſt readily catch, and tranſport furtheſt. The Preacher, like a skillfull Phyſition, can varie his *recipe* according to the exigence of the patient: hee can caſt his diſcourſe into what mould or forme he pleaſe: he can inſinuate, and creepe upon particulars, how ever prepoſſeſs'd, and as occaſion ſerves, invade or ſurpriſe the Affections: he can give food to healthy, and phyſick to diſeaſed minds. And the very act of Preaching, the countenance and geſture, adde life to words, and have a ſingular energie over bare reading; for thus they make all they deliver new, as it were, and their owne, when the other way it ſeemes but flat, and borrowed; they ſet forth Chriſt and his Doctrine with more pompe unto our ſoules: and in preſſing Scripture make it like bruiſed Spices, more raviſhing. Yet its long of us, and our corrupt affections, if Sermons carry it; we are more for ſauce than meate, more tickled with the momentany dreſſe, and reliſh of the workeman, than the meate which endureth. As diſeaſes are commonly alike in different men, the ſame remedies were wee attentive might ſerve our ſeverall ſoules, as doe our bodies. God no doubt was both able and willing to preſcribe Catholike Remedies, for all our Maladies in his Word: and Men uſually more ſufficiently expreſſe themſelves by writing, than by word of mouth;

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upon deliberation, than on the ſuddaine; nay, extemporary diſcourſes, like our actions, are ſubject to extravagancy, and oft times derogate from the Majeſtie of Scripture, and the evidence of the Spirit therein: So that Government, and good lawes, had need to order all; and the Scripture is that all muſt bee ordered by. It is bare Text alone that gives the minde repoſe, and grounds beliefe. As we confine not our ſelves only to ſet formes of doctrine, to ſtint the Spirit; It is good we ſhould have ſome things ſet and fixt to ſtint humane extravagancies: leſt Religion become meerely matter of Phanſy, and the Church be converted into a Babel. It were ingratitude againſt the Spirit, to ſlight ſuch grounds as he hath laid us; and preſumption ſtill wholly to relye on him: but the middle way, to hold ſome thing certaine, and attend his further motions is ſafe. Preaching, and practice, and writing, and government, are all uſefull in the Church towards others, yet where wee have but the Goſpell it ſelfe read, none of them is abſolutely neceſſarie to ſalvation. But if wee muſt compare them, though they are beſt together, government to us now, is no leſſe neceſſary than that which we call preaching. It extends it ſelfe to a larger forme, and it is that muſt keepe preaching and all in order. Preaching may bee more neceſſary for the planting of a Church, but government, as it is more noble, is more neceſſary where a Church is planted. The Church of Chriſt is never ſo ſetled, but it is militant here on earth, and had need of the beſt marſhalling in ranke and fyle: The enemy will finde a gap, or where to make one, if there bee not ſome Generall to overlooke, ſome Commander to ride the round, and ſee the watch ſet, one that for place, and power, need not feare the face of man. Unleſſe we diſlike our Religion,

there

there is no reaſon we ſhould find fault with our Government. If Religion have not much of the image of juſtice in it, a ſword ſometimes to determine us, aſwell as a ballance to weigh truth, her ballance will be deſpiſed. As I have no faith in charmes, I am not wholly for preaching, that bare talking way, without the Spirit, is not like government, to ſettle men in an habituate courſe of pietie. It rather puzzels the beliefe, than actuates our obedience. But with degrees of promotion, induſtry and learning, and ſo preaching it ſelfe, muſt neceſſarily fall. And the more ordinate Church Government, and the more concentrate to unitie it is, it agreeth better with Monarchy, and holds better harmony with its head, which is Chriſt. In the office of a Biſhop, an Archbiſhop, or a Patriarch, as ſtrange as it may ſound, *Calvin* himſelfe could ſee no hurt, while they were ſubject unto Chriſt, an Emperour, and a generall Councell. *Inſt.* 4. 4. 4. And how far the like were not againe to be endeavoured, were a diſquiſition becoming ſtates truly Chriſtian, for by this means, as the promiſe of Chriſt to the Clergie ſhould have its regard, ſtates might enjoy the deliberations of the whole Church, though they retaine the liberty of admitting or rejecting their Counſels. It is ſeene in all eſtates, *Quæ communiter poſſidentur communiter negliguntur*, the very dividing is the deſtruction of power; what can an ordinary man do? or who will care for ſhewing himſelfe in commotions, when the danger ſhall be his owne, and many muſt ſhare in the honour? Let not men flatter themſelves too much in their project of changing the uſe of riches without taking them from the Church, though things perhaps may be better carried both amongſt Biſhops, and downe to the inferiour Clergie, there may be rapine in honours aſwell as in riches, If we take them from God and Religion,

though we cannot convert them to our ſecular uſes: If there be leſſe of private advantage, there may be more of malice in it: but there may be of advantage, in pulling downe others, to get into their places. *Abſalon* himſelfe had other pretences, when in his heart he ſaid, *O that I were made judge in the Land.* But it concernes them that but alter things conſecrate, to be ſure it be to the better; for the ſcandall of innovation goes further than the thing reformed. *Mutato Sacerdotio mutatur etiam & Lex*, ſaith the Apoſtle, and the diſhonouring of the Prieſthood will expoſe it to contempt, and in the end, its to be feared, prove the bane of Religion. I condemne not Churches, which have not, or cannot arrive at our happineſſe; for there is great odds, *inter Eccleſiam conſtituendam, & conſtitutam.* Pietie is the principall, and as we condemne no Church that holds but that *unum neceſſarium* of Pietie, ſo mee thinkes none ſhould condemne us for aſſerting of Pietie, by ſo regular government. But it is fitter they aſpire to our ſtate, than think of reducing us to their condition: with us that of *Peter* to *Ananias* muſt take place, *Act.* 5. 4. *While it remained was it not thine owne? but now thou haſt deceived not men but God.* It is a fearefull ſentence of God to *Samuel*, upon the *Iſraelites*, *Sam.* 8. 7. *Hearken unto the voice of the People ---- for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected mee, that I ſhould reigne over them.* If *Nemo poteſt mutare conceſſum in alterius præjudicium*, ſhall wee without licence from God, take away what was truly given him? This breach how ſmall ſoever at a part, will open a gap to all the Churches patrimony: And though it bee but matter of Diſcipline we talke of; I pray God ſuch diſhonour to the diſcipline, entrench not ſoone upon the Doctrine it ſelfe, and bring that in queſtion. Though-

our

our neighbours of *Scotland* and the Low Countryes, though the emulation of adversaries, as yet keepe upright, with their forme of government; When in cold bloud we shall feele the inconveniences even of the reformed discipline, as they call it, and consider how much we have been out; I pray God we come not to begin again at *Rome*, or *Palestine*, or *Palestine*, as now it is, so find the way to us. For who shall animate Princes for Religion, when the Priest must keep at distance? This question in *England* will be of dangerous consequence in Christendome.

Lastly, such prophane ones as spoyle for the booty, how ever they please themselves in their fury, will one day finde a curse goe along with their prey, which like *Achans* execrable thing, will ruine themselves, and their families. They forfeit their confidence in a providence, and that comfort in their brethren and their own breasts, which should be their life and stay, in time of trouble. They usually dye forlorne of God, and men, miserable, disconsolate, and detested: and yet have more to answer for in the world to come.

IX. The Conclusion.

The Church of *England* (God be thanked) yet retaines the face of a Church. How ever for riches and honours, she comes short of her selfe in former times, she comes behind few Churches in Christendome. We have tythes and oblations, Bishops and governours, rich Colledges and Cathedrals, large priviledges & endowments; such as might make men that like not our Doctrine, fall in love with our discipline, and in admiring these glories, adore the Divinity that provok'd them. She is like the Vine of God in the 80. Psalm. *O let not the wild Bore out of the Forrest breake downe her branches, nor the little Foxes devoure her grapes.* If we have neither so much Piety nor Policy as to contribute to the propa-

gation of our order abroad, nor the promoting of Religion at home; nor to make satisfaction to the Church (as the Lord *Bacon* would have it) for the wrongs of our forefathers. Let us not be guilty of so much Atheism, as to withdraw it's maintenance. Let us not let goe our enchorage, and cast our selvs upon the fluctuations of people. If the Clergy in its height have abused these blessings to their worldly ends (as all estates on earth are subject to abuse) If their happinesse have made them wanton. If to the keyes and their spirituall sword, they be catching at the Temporall, and there be something in their honours, which may occasion them to looke to *Rome*-ward; Let the curbe of Law hold them to their way, and the Triennall Review look as austere on them as on Projectors. What restivenesse soever they have contracted, let provision bee made by wholsome discipline to reclaime them, but withhold not their provender to abate their service. Let us not pursue Vices or Persons so far as to violate offices, offices which have not contracted such guilt, but they may be regenerated. Let us not defeate the charity of our pious Predecessors. Let us not dishonour our State, and the Age we live in. Let us not rob Religion of its Ornaments, the Priest of his Reverence, and God of his Glory. In a word, let us not so flye from *Rome*, as to fall into the mouth of Hell, and rob God, to enrich the Devill againe.

FINIS.